

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

December 7, 2016

The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy  
Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20310-0108

Dear Assistant Secretary Darcy:

We write in strong support of Monroe County, Florida in their efforts to obtain Fiscal Year 2017 Environmental Infrastructure funding for the ongoing Florida Keys Water Quality Improvement Program (FKWQIP).

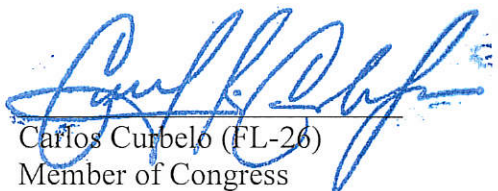
As you know, this vital project authorized by Congress is aiding in the replacement of outdated and problematic sewage treatment systems in the ecologically sensitive area of the Florida Keys. The replacement of sewage treatment systems with state of the art central sewer collection and wastewater treatment systems is benefiting both residents and visitors to South Florida and the National Marine Sanctuary ecosystem. Moreover, these projects are being constructed in a sustainable, cost-efficient, and transparent manner.

To date, FKWQIP local sponsors have received more than \$50 million in funding for this project. This has provided jobs, stimulated the regional economy, and helped to meet the required FKWQIP water quality standards designed to protect and restore the near shore waters of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. Established in 1990, the Sanctuary is a flag-ship marine space in the federal sanctuary program and is the world's third largest coral reef system, protecting the only living barrier coral reef in the continental United States. Mitigating the effects of land-based pollutants, primarily wastewater discharge from storm water runoff, will help ensure this national treasure in South Florida is protected for years to come.

In order to meet the environmental protections for the Sanctuary and coastal areas overwhelmingly owned by Federal and State governments, Keys residents will pay for water treatment standards that are four times more stringent than most any other location in the nation.

As the Army Corps of Engineers begins to reviews projects for FY 2017, and in accordance with all applicable rules and regulations, we ask that you give full and fair consideration to the efforts of the South Florida sponsors to obtain Environmental Infrastructure funding. With additional funding, the local sponsors can continue to provide employment, protect a vital national resource, and most importantly, move the project closer to completion.

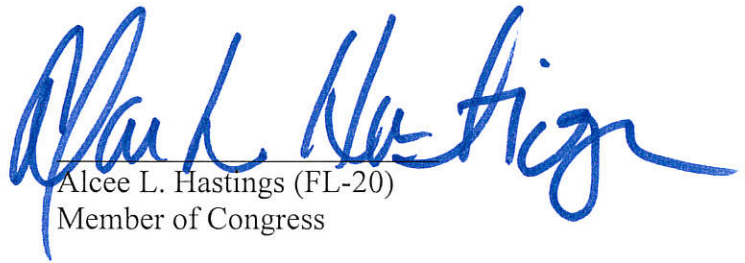
Sincerely,

  
Carlos Curbelo (FL-26)  
Member of Congress

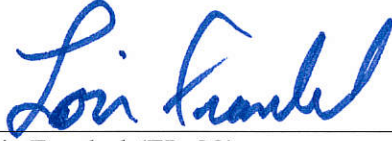
  
Debbie Wasserman Schultz (FL-23)  
Member of Congress



Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (FL-27)  
Member of Congress



Alcee L. Hastings (FL-20)  
Member of Congress



Lois Frankel (FL-22)  
Member of Congress



Mario Diaz-Balart (FL-25)  
Member of Congress



Theodore E. Deutch (FL-21)  
Member of Congress



Frederica Wilson (FL-24)  
Member of Congress